What is the Ombudsman Program?

The Ombudsman
Program helps to ensure
quality resident care in
nursing facilities,
assisted living centers,
and residential living
centers. The
Ombudsman is an
advocate whose goal is
to promote the highest



quality of life for residents by serving as a communication bridge between the resident and the facility.

The Ombudsman Program is a nationwide program administered in South Dakota by the Department of Social Services (DSS) Division of Adult Services and Aging. The role of the Ombudsman includes the following:

- Advocate The Ombudsman works on behalf of residents and may negotiate with facility staff, file complaints, or work with the nursing facility's resident council.
- Educator The Ombudsman works to educate residents, families, friends, or potential consumers about their rights and responsibilities in a facility. Brochures and other information are available to inform the public on their rights.
- Investigator The Ombudsman investigates complaints and grievances to insure that they are resolved fairly.
- Mediator The Ombudsman may serve as an impartial mediator between the resident and staff, other residents, or family members. The Ombudsman may be a spokesperson for the resident, communicating concerns to appropriate staff or family members until that concern is resolved.

What services does the Ombudsman provide?

- Distributes resident rights literature.
- Distributes posters in the facility explaining resident rights.
- Conducts resident rights in-service training to facility staff.
- Provides technical assistance to families seeking to place a relative.
- Provides general information to the community regarding resources for long-term care, resident rights, choosing a facility, Medicaid, Medicare, and the Ombudsman Program.

Who can use the Ombudsman Program?

- Residents of nursing facilities, assisted living centers, and residential living centers.
- Friends and relatives of residents in facilities.
- Facility staff.
- Public agencies.
- Senior citizen groups.
- Any person or group interested in the well-being of facility residents.

Anyone who believes that conditions in a facility may violate a resident's rights under state or federal law, rules or regulations may request the services of the Ombudsman Program.

Frequent visits are the best way to insure that residents are receiving quality care. Residents are more likely to share their real feelings and concerns with someone they know well.

What if there is a concern or complaint?

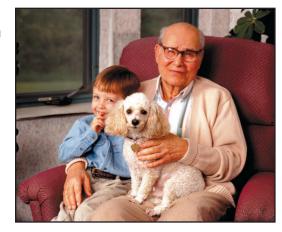
When a concern arises, visit with facility staff (administrator, director of nursing, social services) to attempt to resolve the concern. If the concern is not resolved to the satisfaction of the resident, contact the Ombudsman Program for assistance.

Facilities are required to display an Ombudsman poster with the phone numbers of the state and local Ombudsman.

What happens after a complaint has been filed?

An Ombudsman will respond promptly and investigate the complaint. If a complaint is substantiated, the Ombudsman will work to resolve the complaint with the facility.

The Ombudsman
Program also works with
the Department of
Health's Licensure and
Certification and the
Attorney General's
Medicaid Fraud Control
Unit to investigate and
resolve identified
problems. The name of
an individual filing a
complaint can be kept



confidential. But in some instances, better results may be obtained if the complainant is identified.

For more information or to file a complaint, contact your local DSS Adult Services and Aging office. (See listing on back.)

Department of Social Services Adult Services and Aging Offices

Aberdeen: (605) 626-3145 422 S. Washington PO Box 1300, 57402

Belle Fourche: (605) 892-2731 609 5th Ave., 57717

Brookings: (605) 688-4330 1310 Main Ave. S., Suite 101, 57006

Chamberlain: (605) 734-4500 810 N. Main, PO Box 430, 57325

Deadwood: (605) 578-2402 20 Cliff St., PO Box 607, 57732

Hot Springs: (605) 745-5100 2500 Minnekahta Ave., Bldg. 1, PO Box 729, 57747

Huron: (605) 353-7112 110 3rd St. SW, Suite 200, PO Box 1408, 57350

Lake Andes: (605) 487-7607 3rd & Lake, PO Box 190, 57356

Madison: (605) 256-5683 223 S. Van Eps Ave., Suite 201, 57042

Martin: (605) 685-6521 404 Third Ave., PO Box 250, 57551

Mission: (605) 856-4431 671 N. Marge Lane PO Box 818, 57555

Mitchell: (605) 995-8000 116 E. 11th Ave., 57301

Mobridge: (605) 845-2922

920 6th St. W., PO Box 160, 57601

Olivet: (605) 387-4219 Courthouse, 140 Euclid, Room 127, 57052

Pierre: (605) 773-3521 912 E. Sioux, 57501

Pine Ridge: (605) 867-5865 Planning Center Building PO Box 279, 57770

Rapid City: (605) 355-3588 510 N. Cambell PO Box 2440, 57709

Redfield: (605) 472-4220 Courthouse, 210 E. 7th Ave... 57469

Sioux Falls: (605) 367-5400 811 E. 10th St., Dept. 4, 57103

Sisseton: (605) 698-7673 119 E. Cherry St. PO Box 230, 57262

Sturgis: (605) 347-2588 2200 W. Main Street, 57785

Vermillion: (605) 677-6800 114 Market St., PO Box 516, 57069

Watertown: (605) 882-5003 2001 9th Ave. SW, Suite 300, PO Box 670, 57201

Winner: (605) 842-0400 649 W. Second St., PO Box 31. 57580

Yankton: (605) 668-3030

3113 Spruce St., Suite 200, 57078

Department of Social Services **Adult Services and Aging**

Toll-free 1-866-854-5465 or (605) 773-3656



Visit Our Web Site at: www.state.sd.us/social/asa

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Ombudsman Services

A Communication Bridge



Promoting the Highest Quality of Life

Department of Social Services **Adult Services and Aging**